

What's Playing in Africa: Tuesday, May 18, 2010

Produced by the Regional Media Hub: Africa



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On the U.S.

<http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article35110>

U.S. kicks off agricultural program in South Sudan

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) inaugurated a \$55 million program in the semi-autonomous region of South Sudan aimed at helping farmers there to develop their agricultural potential. Last month, the World Food Program (WFP) warned that South Sudan is facing a major food crisis that could lead to a “free fall” impacting 4.3 million people living off assistance. Furthermore, the Government of South Sudan (GoSS) has announced last Friday the lifting of taxes on food products in response to the looming hunger in the region. USAID said that a five-year initiative, called the Food, Agribusiness, and Rural Markets (FARM) program, will initially focus on select counties in southern Sudan’s ‘green belt zone,’ which spans Western, Central, and Eastern Equatoria states, and where conflict destroyed much of the local capacity for agricultural production during Sudan’s civil war.

Governance

<http://www.thisdayonline.com/nview.php?id=173465>

2011: Politicians Pledge Support for Delta SSG

Top Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) chieftains in Delta North Senatorial district have given overwhelming support to the Secretary to the Delta State Government, Dr Ifeanyi Okowa, on his interest to contest the Senatorial position in the 2011 general elections. In Asaba last week, where Okowa formally declared his intention to contest for the post, prominent politicians from different parts of the Senatorial district expressed their satisfaction with his aspiration and pledged their support for him. According to a statement issued and made available to THISDAY yesterday by the Personal Assistant to the SSG on Media, Kingsley Azuh, some politicians who spoke at the event, described Okowa as a credible, focused and astute political leader with unassailable track record of performance. They singled out Okowa’s robust political career and experience as well as his ability and commitment to positively

touch the lives of many Deltans as well as the distinguished credentials that placed him above other aspirants.

http://www.jimmatimes.com/article/Latest_News/Latest_News/Zenawi_compares_Birtukan_to_US_handling_of_terrorists_in_Guantanamo_prison/33474

Zenawi compares Birtukan to US handling of terrorists in Guantanamo prison

Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, who ruled Ethiopia for 19 years, does not want to release opposition leader Judge Birtukan Mideksa. The Oromo-Ethiopian Birtukan Mideksa is the first woman leader of a political organization in Ethiopia and one of the main advocates of peaceful struggle for democracy to bring change in the country. Since taking over the country's reins, Mr. Meles has steadily reduced Ethiopia's reliance on foreign aid, but this still accounts for about 30% of the budget. And despite a number of low-level insurgencies in the country, Ethiopia has remained the most stable country in the Horn of Africa. But critics of Mr. Meles say that his academic achievements and oratory blind Western donors to, what they say is, an intolerance for dissent, a disregard for civil liberties and a culture of political repression.

http://www.garoweonline.com/artman2/publish/Somalia_27/Somalia_President_to_appoint_new_PM_Speaker_resigns.shtml

President Sharif to appoint new PM, Speaker resigns

The speaker of Somalia's parliament Sheikh Adan Mohammed Nur Madobe has resigned from his position, Radio Garowe reports. Madobe said he took the decision to save the fragile government from collapse and also unite the divided parliament, which is in disarray following internal rife between members.

"I have decided to relinquish my position as the speaker of the Somali parliament in order to end the dispute in the house," he said.

<http://en.afrik.com/article17652.html>

Guinea: Presidential campaign begins

It's official. Campaigning for the June presidential election began Monday in Guinea. The list of candidates for the election, scheduled to take place June 27, will remain open until May 21. Eight people, including Alpha Conde and Sidya Toure have so far filed their candidacy. The election is expected to return Guinea to democracy after 50 years of autocratic rule. Campaigning began on Monday in Guinea. Expected in a mixture of apprehension and hope by the Guinean population, the June 27 election precedes the first free presidential polls in the history of the West African country. 73 year-old Alpha Conde, sole survivor of the first pluralistic presidential election in 1993, is among the list of candidates bidding for the highest office. Emblematic figure of the Guinean opposition, Alpha Conde, who refused to participate in the 2003 election for "lack of transparency", was invested Sunday as the flag-bearer of the Rassemblement du Peuple de Guinea (RPG) in Conakry. He makes his entry into the electoral arena alongside former Premiers; Cellou Dalein Diallo of Union des forces démocratiques de Guinée (UFDG), Lansana Kouyaté of Parti de l'espoir pour le développement national de la Guinée (PEDN) and Sidya Touré of Union des forces républicaines (UFR)

<http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJOE64G0QP20100517>

Nigeria's president picks new head of oil firm NNPC

Nigeria's President Goodluck Jonathan on Monday promoted Austin Oniwon to be the new head of Nigerian National Petroleum Corp (NNPC), his second change at the top of the state-run oil firm in less than six weeks. Oniwon, who was group executive director of refineries and petrochemicals, replaces Shehu Ladan who was appointed NNPC's group managing director in early April. A presidential

spokesman declined to give a reason for the change, but did say the finance ministry would begin an audit into the NNPC's accounts. "The president has directed a comprehensive audit of NNPC accounts," said Ima Niboro, special adviser to the president.

Conflict

<http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article35115>

LRA kills three Sudanese in deadly ambush in Western Equatoria

Three Sudanese nationals were killed when their car was bushed by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebels in southern Sudan state of Western Equatoria, eyewitness confirmed on Monday. The passengers were travelling in a government car when the fighters shot them dead on Monday, Sudan Tribune learned.

The victims of the fatal casualties were three men who were traveling from Yambio to Tambura. All of them were government officials, Mr. William Arkangelo Baabe, was also known as "Small William" he served as State Director of Accelerated Adult Education, Mr. Gabriel Makana as Director of Finance and Administration and a driver in the State Ministry of Education, Science and Technology.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/8688613.stm>

Top EU diplomat Aston begins anti piracy tour

The EU's top diplomat is to visit East Africa at the start of a tour aimed at curbing piracy off Somalia's coast. The EU High Representative, Catherine Ashton, has said she wants to encourage a regional approach to the problem. In Nairobi, she will be confronted by Kenyan leaders fed up with carrying what they say has been the burden of responsibility for dealing with piracy. Kenya has agreed to prosecute pirates caught at sea by the EU force - the only nation in the region to do so. It was to have been part of a wider regional effort. But so far no other country has agreed to let suspects into their legal system, and the Kenyans have called a halt to their own prosecutions.

Corruption

<http://www.thisdayonline.com/nview.php?id=173474>

Ibori: EFCC, Met Police Meet for Extradition

Following last Wednesday's arrest and granting of bail to the former Delta State Governor James Ibori in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE), security operatives from Nigeria, UAE and United Kingdom will meet today in Dubai to exchange files and documents that will pave the way for the former governor's extradition.

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) officials arrived Dubai at the weekend to work with the London Metropolitan Police, Dubai security officials and Interpol to work on Ibori's extradition to UK. The former governor, who had accused his "political enemies in Nigeria" and their UK "co-conspirators of declaring him wanted over charges that have not yet been made public just to influence the outcome of the case against some of his associates in a London court," was declared wanted in Nigeria. He was also wanted in UK in connection with an ongoing trial involving some of his associates. Chairman of EFCC, Mrs. Farida Waziri, had last Thursday said that the anti-graft agency would collaborate with the Met Police in the extradition of Ibori. The former governor, who was asked to surrender his passport after being granted bail last Thursday, is expected to remain in Dubai until his fate is determined.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/8688550.stm>

Cocaine smuggling Nigerian politician held in Lagos

Nigerian politician has been arrested on suspicion of smuggling cocaine at Lagos airport. Nigerian drug enforcement officials say Eme Zuru Ayortor swallowed nearly two kilograms of cocaine (4.4 lbs) in order

to fund his election campaign. Police say body scanners revealed the contents of his stomach as he attempted to board a flight to Frankfurt. Mr. Ayortor, aged 52, is running in the election to the local House of Assembly in Edo state. Officers from Nigeria's drug law enforcement agency say they recovered 100 parcels of cocaine from the politician's stomach at Lagos' Murtala Mohammed International Airport.

Economic

<http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJOE64G0Q120100517>

Zimbabwe mineworkers call off strike, head to court

Zimbabwe's mineworkers have called off a strike, a union official said on Monday, ending a protest that paralyzed the country's gold mines that are still battling to recover from a decade-long economic crisis. Associated Mineworkers' Union of Zimbabwe (AMWUZ) president Tinago Ruzive told Reuters that workers had ended the strike to pave the way for court action. "The strike has ended, we have told all workers to report for duty tomorrow," Ruzive said. "The labour minister has directed us to go to the labour court for redress and we will get a hearing on Thursday."

Women Issues

<http://www.newtimes.co.rw/index.php?issue=14264&article=29256>

Empowering women is key to development- Kagame

President Paul Kagame has praised Rwandan women for their role in the development of the country, adding that empowering women and ensuring gender equality were yardsticks for development. Kagame, made the remarks, yesterday, while opening a two day International Conference on the "Role of Leadership in Promoting Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment." "Empowering women and ensuring gender equality ultimately enriches communities and entire nations. Both historically, during our liberation struggle and even more recently, in reconstructing our country, women have contributed greatly and have been at the forefront of political, economic and reconciliation initiatives," Kagame said. He challenged world leaders to exploit the potential of the youth as a means towards new and innovative ways to sustain and accelerate progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment around the world.

<http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJOE64G0SH20100517>

Seychelles meets IMF program targets: statement

The Seychelles has met all targets under its IMF loan program and its economy is set to expand by 4 percent this year thanks to a recovery in tourism earnings, the International Monetary Fund said on Monday. Growth is likely to rise further to 5 percent in 2011, according to the IMF Web site. This is a big improvement after the economy contracted nearly 8 percent in 2009 following an acute balance of payments crisis in late 2008. The IMF said 12-month inflation in the Seychelles, which was negative during the past few months, would likely return to about 1 percent by year end.

Health

<http://www.namibian.com.na/news/full-story/archive/2010/may/article/rift-valley-fever-in-namibia/>

Rift Valley fever in Namibia

NAMIBIAN meat farmers face huge losses as a result of a ban on all exports following an outbreak of Rift Valley fever in the Hardap and Karas regions. Key role players in the industry under the leadership of the Meat Board will meet in Windhoek this morning to assess the impact of the ban and pave the way forward.

The acting chief veterinary officer in the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry, Dr Cleopas Bamhare, announced on Friday that an immediate ban had been placed on the export of all meat

products from the two regions. This followed the confirmation of an outbreak of the disease on two farms in the Hardap Region and "one suspicious outbreak under investigation in the Karas Region". At this stage, the ban will be in place for one week and includes the slaughter of cattle, sheep and goats at export abattoirs. The sale of animals at auctions has also been suspended.

Of Interest

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/8687537.stm>

Porous South Africa airport security exposed

South African journalists say they have smuggled dangerous items onto domestic flights in hand luggage ahead of next month's football World Cup. The journalist behind the report told the BBC the items included knives, syringes, screwdrivers and razors. Mandy Weiner said security was "porous", as banned items had got onto more than half the flights targeted. But an airport security spokesperson said both local and international standards were being met. As part of the investigation carried out by South Africa's Eyewitness News, 10 planes departing from major tourist hubs in South Africa were targeted over three months. Ms Weiner explained that on one occasion a journalist tried to smuggle "harmless products masquerading as explosives." "We labeled them as two products which, if combined, could bring down a plane," she said.

<http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJOE64G03F20100517>

S.Africa rail, port strike widens to hit commuters

A South African rail and port strike widened on Monday, threatening to bring Africa's biggest economy to a standstill with two million train passengers stranded as the industrial action entered its second week. Weekend talks to end the strike over pay at state-owned logistics group Transnet failed and both the company and unions said no new negotiations were planned. The strike has dented exports of metals, fruit and wine to customers in Europe and Asia and slowed imports of automotive parts after nearly two-thirds of Transnet's 54,000-strong workforce joined in.

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